

THE BIG BLUE UNION.

BY G. D. SWEARINGEN.

"Westward the Star of Empire takes its Way."

VOLUME I, NUMBER XIX.

MARYSVILLE, KANSAS, SATURDAY, AUGUST 2, 1862.

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G. D. SWEARINGEN, Proprietor.

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March, 1862.

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Marysville, Marshall Co. Kansas.

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A SOLDIER'S LETTER AND A WOMAN'S ANSWER.

HOSPITAL, April, 1862.

I write with a great deal of pain, dear girl; I've not been able before since the fight, and my brain is still so much in a whirl, that I can tell you but little to-night. I'm wounded—don't start—'tis not very bad, or at least it might be worse; so I said, When I thought of you, I'm sure she'll be glad to know that I'm only wounded—not dead."

I've lost my left arm—there, now you know all! A Minnie ball shattered it, and I fell; The last that I heard was our captain's call, Until—the rest is too painful to tell. I've had throughout the most excellent care, And am doing finely, the surgeon says; So well, indeed, that the prospect is fair For a homeward trip before many days.

But I've something else, dear Mary, to say, And I'd say it if it cost me my life; I've thought of it well—there's no other way— You're released from your promise to be my wife; You'll think me foolish at first; then you'll think Of the loose, armless coat-sleeve at my side; And your proud and sensitive heart will shrink From the thought of being a cripple's bride.

Tina, bitter struggle to give you up, For I've loved you more than ever of late; But down to its depths I've drained the cup, And I'm calm, though my heart is desolate. I'm coming home, and of course we must meet; My darling, this once, one boon I implore— Let us still be friends—for that will be sweet, Since now, alas! we can be nothing more.

SWEET HOME, April, 1862.

My Robert, how brave and noble you are! Too brave and too noble, I know, for me; But you've too little faith in me by far, If you believe that I want to be free. I'm not released from my promise—no, no! 'Twas never so sacred to me before; If you could but know how I've longed to go And watch by your side, you'd doubt me no more.

I read your name in the terrible list, But the tears broke back that sprang to my eye; And a fearful pain that I could not resist, Crushed my heart till it only longed to die. The blessed tears, and by and by, came again, And I felt, as you in your letter said, A feeling of gladness 'mid all my pain, That Robert was only wounded—not dead.

Oh, darling! to think you have suffered so, And I, all these long, weary miles away; You've needed me very often, I know, While I could do nothing but hope and pray, But hardest of all is the bitter thought That you have been suffering so much for me; Poor Robert! your manly letter has brought A strange mélange of joy and misery.

But you're coming home to my arms and heart; You're right—I am proud and sensitive, too; But I'm only so when we are apart, And now, I shall only be proud of you! You're coming home to happiness and rest, And I wait the moment of blissful calm, When I shall be held to a Soldier's breast By a Patriot Hero's one strong arm!

THE TONE OF BULLETS.—A soldier writing from one of the camps in Virginia, thus alludes to the peculiar music made by bullets passing through the air: It is a very good place to exercise the mind with the enemy's pickets rattling close at hand. A musical ear can study the different tones of bullets as they skim through the air. I caught the pitch on a large sized Minnie yesterday. It was a swell from E flat to F, and as it passed into distance and lost its velocity, receded to D, a very pretty change. One of the most startling sounds is that produced by the Hotchkiss shell. It comes like the shriek of a demon, and the bravest old soldiers feel like ducking when they hear it. It is no more destructive than some other bullets, but there is a great deal in mere sound to work upon men's fears. The tremendous scream is caused by a ragged edge of lead, which is left on the shell.

A WONDERFUL STORY.—The following is related in the "Courier des Etats Unis," by a Parisian correspondent: The Emperor was reviewing a body of infantry one day, when his eye was caught by a drummer with only one arm, but was nevertheless still playing. "Where is your left arm?" "At Solferino, sire." "You shall have a pension of four hundred francs from my private purse." "And if I should leave the other on the same road, sire?" "This," replied Napoleon, pointing to his own rosette of an officer of the Legion of Honor.

"The cross!" and carried away by a transport of enthusiasm, the new Porsenna, with the remaining arm, drew his sabre, and at one vigorous blow cut it clean off.

Men are afraid of slight outward acts which will injure them in the eyes of others, while they are heedless of the damage that rests upon them for the fashionable follies and the sins which they commit against a long-suffering and merciful God.

Letter from Orpheus C. Kerr.

The Hot Weather and the Black Republicans—Victory on Duck Lake—The Constitution and Custard Pie—The day is Ours, etc.

Owing to the persistent stupidity of Congress and the hideously treacherable machinations of the unscrupulous Black Republicans, my boy, the weather still continues very hot; and unless the thermometer falls very soon, an exasperated populace will demand an immediate change in the Cabinet. I am very warm, my boy, I am very warm; and when I reflect upon the agency of the abolitionists, who have brought this sort of thing about for the express purpose of injuring my Constitution, I am impelled to ask myself:—Did our Revolutionary forefathers indeed expire in vain? O, my country! my country! it is very warm.

I was talking some moments ago with a regimental surgeon, who has more patients on a monument than Shakespeare ever dreamed about, and says he: "In consequence of the great number of troops now about this city, all the oxygen in the atmosphere is exhausted, and we are very warm. Had these troops been sent to McClellan two weeks ago," says he, using his lancet to pick a dead fly out of his tumbler, "we might be able to keep cool now. There is a terrible and awful responsibility on somebody's shoulders."

That's very true, my boy, and its very warm.

There was a panic this morning in financial circles, owing to the frantic conduct of a gambling chap from the Senate, who has been saving up money to bet on the fall of Richmond, and was trying to put it out at interest. "I'll take seven per cent. for it the first year," says he, anxiously, "and leave it standing until national strategy comes to a head."

A broker took it for five years, my boy, with the privilege of extending the time after each fresh victory.

Speaking of victories, my boy, I was present at the recent series of triumphs by the Mackerel Brigade, on the left shore of Duck Lake, and witnessed a succession of feats calculated to culminate either in the fall of Richmond or the fall of the year.

From the headquarters in the city of Paris to the brink of Duck Lake, the Mackerels were drawn up in gorgeous line of battle, their bayonets resembling somewhat an uncombed head of steel hair, and their noes looking like a wavy strip of summer sunset. By their last great strategical manoeuvre, they had lured the Southern Confederacy to court its own destruction by flanking them at both ends of the line. They were only waiting for the signal.

Staff advanced from his post, as I rode up, and says he:

"Comrades, the general depends on you to precede him to glory. We had hoped," says Samyule, feelingly, "to have the company of two French counts in this day's slaughter; but these two noble generals had not time to wait, as they desired to visit the Great Exhibition in London."

These remarks were well received by my boy, and when the order was given for Company 3, Regiment 5, to detour to the left, it would have been promptly obeyed but for an unforeseen incident. Just as Capt. William Brown was about to break line for the purpose, an aged chap came dashing down from a First Family country seat near by, and says he to the General of the Mackerel Brigade:

"I demand a guard for my premises immediately. My wife," says he with dignity, "has just been making a custard-pie for the sick Confederates in the hospital, and as she has just set it out to cool near where my little boy shot one of your vandals this morning, she is afraid it might be taken by your thieving mudsills when they come after the body. I, therefore, demand a guard for my premises in the name of the Constitution of our forefathers."

Here Captain Bob Shorty stepped forward, and says he:

"What does the Constitution say about custard pie, Mr. Davis?"

The aged chap spat at him, and says he: "I claim protection under that clause which refers to the pursuit of happiness. Custard pie," says he reasonably, "are included in the pursuit of happiness."

"That's very true," said the general, looking kindly over his fan at the venerable petitioner. "Let a guard be detailed to protect this good old man's premises. We are fighting for the Constitution, not against it."

A guard was detailed, my boy, with orders to make no resistance if they were fired upon occasionally from the windows of the house, and then Capt. William Brown pushed forward with what was left of Company 3, to engage the Confederacy on the edge of Duck Lake, supported by the Orange County Howitzers. Headed by the band, who played patriotic airs as soon as he could shake the crumbs out of his key-bugle, the cavalcade advanced to the edge of the lake and opened a heavy salute of round shot and musketry on the atmosphere, whilst Commodore Head kept up a hot fire on the horizon with his iron-plated fleet and swivel gun.

Only waiting to finish a game of base ball, in which they had been engaged, four regiments of Confederates, at whom this deadly assault was directed, threw aside their bats and ball dresses, put on their uniforms, loaded their muskets and batteries, and sent an iron shower in all directions. Greatly demoralized by this unseemly occurrence, a file of Mackerels under Sergeant O'Pake immediately threw down their muskets and knapsacks, emptied their pockets upon the ground, piled their neck-ties in a heap, and were making a rapid retrograde movement when Viliam suddenly threw himself in their path, and says he:

"Where are you going to, my fearless eaglets?"

"Hem!" says the Sergeant, with much French in his manner, "we thought of visiting the great exhibition in London."

"Ah!" says Viliam, understandingly. "You have acquired French in one easy lesson, and—"

Here an orderly rode up with an order for the Mackerels to fall back from the edge of the Lake immediately leaving their artillery, bayonets, havelocks and baggage behind them; and Viliam was obliged to conduct the movement, which was a part of the great strategical scheme of the general of the Mackerel Brigade. As we retreated back into Paris, my boy, we were joined by the Conic Section, and shortly after by the anatomical Cavalry, both of which had succeeded in leaving all their accoutrements on the field.

As we all rushed together before headquarters in perfect order, and while the Confederacy was eating some provisions which we had refrained from bringing off the late scene of conflict, the general of the Mackerel Brigade came from under a tree, where he had been fanning himself, and says he:

"My children, we have whipped them at all points, and the day is ours."

"Ah!" says Viliam, abstractedly, "the day is hours."

"My children," says the General in continuation, "we have pushed the enemy to the wall without fracturing the Constitution, and have only put the war back six months. We can say with pride, my children, that we belong to the Army of Duck Lake, and shall have no more Bull Runs. My children, I love you. Accept my blessing."

We were reflecting upon this soul-stirring speech, my boy, and silently admiring the strategy which had brought us all together again so soon, when the sound of drum and life called our attention to a club of political chaps who had just arrived by steamer from the Sixth Ward, and were filing past us to a platform recently erected in the very centre of Paris.

"I do believe," says Captain Bob Shorty, whisperingly, "I do believe we're going to have a mass meeting."

Onward went the political chaps to the platform.

A delegation mounted the steps, advanced to the front rails and commenced unfurling a vast linen banner. The sun was just setting, my boy, and his parting beams fell upon the up-lifted faces of the political chaps, a soft breeze unrolled the standard and the Mackerels read upon its folds:

REGULAR CONSERVATIVE NOMINATION
For
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
IN 1865,
THE GENERAL OF THE MACKEREL BRIGADE.

Shall it be said, after this, that republics are ungrateful? I think not my boy—I think not. We have won a great and glorious victory, and the only remaining question to be answered is, Who is responsible for it, my boy, who is responsible for it. Yours, in bewilderment,

ORPHEUS C. KERR.

"Porter," asked an old lady, of an Irish railway porter, "when does the nine o'clock train leave?" "Sixty minutes past eight, mum," was Mike's reply.

Secession.

A finished compound of all the discordant, disorganizing elements which afflict and curse humanity. In hell, there can be no secession, because, "devils damned, firm concord hold." Secession hoists the flood-gate, through which every conceivable curse, which can visit mortals, flows. It says to diabolous, the devil, "punch" up your emissaries, drive them on to eternal ruin, now's the time, don't let the opportunity slip: tell the leaders they shall have crowns and thrones in hell—"better reign in hell than serve in heaven." It says to death, come, do your work—don't leave a single husband of all the weeping wives of these poor soldiers—don't leave a father of all the suffering, starving children throughout the country—make widows and orphans of them all—make a cleansweep of it, finish your work, and do it well—Don't spare a single son to return home to gladden the hearts of fathers and mothers crushed to earth—It says to Military tyrants burn up and destroy as you go, produce of every kind—Leave neither cotton to clothe, nor bread to feed the hungry, starving poor—It says to servants, now's your time, gather up all you can carry, and be off, put out at once.—Perched at last upon some towering pinnacle the grim, ghastly monster beholds a world in ruins laid, and chuckles at the work it has done. Secession breaks up all governments human and divine, and scatters broad-cast discord, confusion, desolation, sorrow, affliction, ruin, and death everywhere. The aims and objects of Secession. Detestable monster! What philanthropist, patriot, or christian can offer an apology for such a hateful, loathing, damnable a creature as Secession!

The Auburn N. Y. Advertiser says that the catching of frogs at Montezuma, has become quite a considerable trade. It adds: For three or four seasons past two men have made the impaling of frogs their business. Every other day they ship from Auburn a barrel of frogs for the New York or Buffalo market. They make very handsome wages. The method of securing these *basso profundus* of the marshes is very similar to spearing for fish. The men paddle off through the marsh in the night with a dark lantern. They approach the haunt of the frog very quietly, and when near enough throw their dart with a certainty acquired by practice, always hitting them back of the head, killing them instantly. The hind quarters are then carefully skinned and cut off, packed in barrels and sent to their destination.—They generally secure two or three hundred in a night, and are paid \$6 a hundred.

WOMAN'S TONGUE.—It was undoubtedly the lack of something to do that set Eve to talking with the devil. If she had had some crinoline or a "love" of a bonnet to try on or show to her neighbors, when Adam was down town on business, the fatal apple would never have been eaten at all.

If the Spring put forth no blossoms, in Summer there will be no beauty, and in Autumn no fruit. So if youth be trifled away without improvements, ripper years will be contemptible, and old age miserable.

It is said that the Tartans invite a man to drink by gently pulling his ear. A good many of our people will "take a pull" without waiting to have their ears pulled.

Let no man be too proud to work. Let no man be ashamed of a hard fist or a sunburnt countenance. Let him be ashamed of ignorance and sloth, of dishonesty and idleness.

In every true man's soul there is a tinge of melancholy. In the recesses of the thick branches and leaves of the mighty oak, twilight lingers even through the mid-day.

If misfortune comes into your house, be patient and smile pleasantly, and it will stalk out again, for it cannot bear cheerful company.

It is not work that kills men, but worry. It is not the revolution that destroys the machinery, but the friction.

The lash that man does not object to having laid on his shoulders—the eyelash of a pretty woman. Is that so?

A man may be called poverty-stricken when knocked down by a beggar.

The rolling-stone sees most of the world.